



Coffeeville First Baptist Church
By **Craig Baker, Pastor**

Chapter 3 of the Book of Esther begins with the words, "After these things." These things are the events recorded in Esther 2:21-23 which tell us two of the king's eunuchs were plotting to kill him. We are not told what caused the eunuchs to become so upset with the king that they wished him dead. Perhaps they disagreed with his choice of a queen, or maybe after the Greeks defeated the king's army twice in short order, they questioned his leadership. Whatever the reason, they became so upset with the king they made plans to kill him.

Their problem was they were not discreet with their plans. Mordecai overheard the eunuch's plan and reported it to Esther. She in turn told King Ahasuerus. An investigation was conducted that revealed the plot was real, and the men were dealt with. As was customary in those days, an account of what Mordecai had done to save the king was recorded in the chronicles of the king which were a written account of the significant events that happened during a king's reign.

Mordecai had saved the king's life, and we would expect him to be rewarded, but as we all know, things do not always work out like we expect them to.

If anyone deserved to be promoted for his loyalty to the king, most of us would say it was Mordecai, but out of nowhere the king promoted Haman. For Haman to be promoted to such a high position, second only to the king in all the kingdom, seems to make no sense.

All of us can relate to how Mordecai must have felt because at times we have all had to endure the unfairness of life and know how much it hurts. Mordecai saved the king's life, and some other guy, gets a promotion. However, that was not the worst of it. To top it off, the king ordered all the other servants, including Mordecai, to show honor and submission to Haman by bowing whenever he passed by them. We do not know how Mordecai reacted to not being rewarded for saving the king but bowing to Haman was too much. Mordecai refused to obey the king's order to bow to Haman.

Many have made speculations as to why Mordecai refused to bow to Haman. Some say Mordecai refused to bow because it would be breaking God's command to not worship any other god, but we have no record of Mordecai ever refusing to bow before the king. Also, other great Jewish leaders like Abraham and David bowed before men. Some say Mordecai was simply acting out in jealousy and spite, but there is no indication of that in the text. In fact, the details given in the text make it clear why Mordecai would not bow to Haman. When answering the king's servants Mordecai justified

his actions by simply saying he was a Jew. Chapter 3 also tells us Haman was an Agagite which means he was a descendant of the Amalekite king, Agag.

Because the Amalekites had attacked the Jews instead of helping them when they came out of Egypt, God had cursed the Amalekites and declared they would always be enemies of the Jews. The Jews were to have nothing to do with the Amalekites, especially not submit to them or give them honor. Mordecai could not bring himself to disobey God by bowing to Haman.

Apparently, Mordecai explained this to the other servants who tried to convince him to bow to Haman. The servants, possibly fearing they would be punished if they did not say something, tell Haman about Mordecai's defiance.

I can picture Haman coming through the king's gate. He is a proud man declared by the king as the second most powerful and prominent man in the kingdom. He is sitting on his own throne of sorts elaborately adorned and being carried by four strong men; towering above the crowd and surrounded by a parade of servants. Normally, he does not even give others the dignity of looking at them, but today he is looking through the crowd for a man named Mordecai, the defiant Jew.

Sure enough, all those around him fall on their face in his presence except one. As he looks out over the crowd, Haman sees Mordecai standing defiantly. How dare someone mock the great Haman by not bowing before him? At least in

Haman's eyes this begins a power struggle between these two men, and he was determined to show Mordecai who was the (Cont'd. on page 14)



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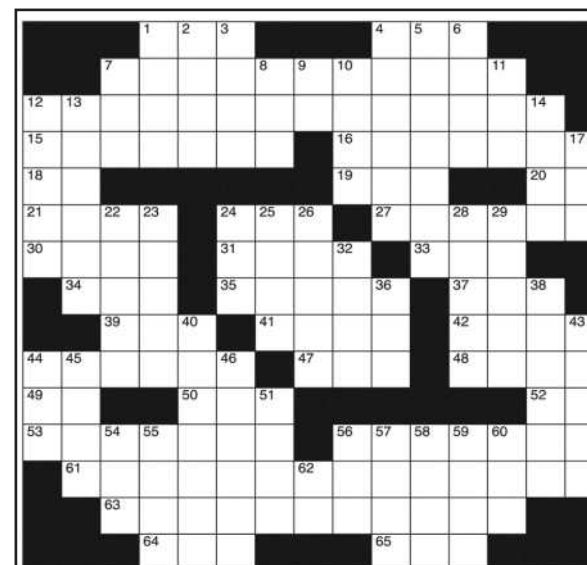
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CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Blockchain-based entity
- 4. A woolen cap of Scottish origin
- 7. Painted with glue
- 12. Legendary crooner
- 15. Structure made with strips of wood
- 16. Tropical fruits
- 18. Commercial
- 19. Comedienne Gasterey
- 20. The Ocean State
- 21. Ancient Scot
- 24. Basics
- 27. Stated propositions
- 30. Scottish island group
- 31. Expression of annoyance
- 33. Large tree
- 34. Engine additive
- 35. Conspiracy
- 37. Drunkard
- 39. Someone who is morally reprehensible
- 41. Ancient Syrian city
- 42. Mild yellow Dutch cheese made in balls
- 44. Carry (slang)
- 47. Sweet potato
- 48. European river
- 49. The Golden State
- 50. Windy City ballplayer
- 52. New Testament
- 53. Possess spiritually
- 56. A treeless grassy plain
- 61. Popular historical novel
- 63. In a law-abiding way
- 64. A place to sleep
- 65. Criticize

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Impression in a surface
- 2. Computer language
- 3. Relating to the ear
- 4. Occupant
- 5. Member of Great Plains people
- 6. Social media firm
- 7. Digital audiotape
- 8. Midway between east and southeast
- 9. Chronic, progressive disease
- 10. Chinese lute
- 11. Not wet
- 12. Moves wings up and down
- 13. Communication devices
- 14. Swiss river
- 17. Female sibling
- 22. Receive
- 23. Relating to a type
- 24. General's assistant (abbr.)
- 25. Steep bank
- 26. Taxi driver
- 28. Moves into without difficulty
- 29. Bicycle manufacturer
- 32. Traditional rhythmic pattern
- 36. Fugitives are on it
- 38. Bitter-tasting organic substance
- 40. Die
- 43. Matched
- 44. Literary genre ___-fi
- 45. Cannot
- 46. Pounded
- 51. British rock group
- 54. Debt relief order
- 55. 2006 NL Cy Young winner
- 56. Green vegetable
- 57. Tough outer skin of fruit
- 58. ___ Spumante (Italian wine)
- 59. Ailments
- 60. Famed singer Charles
- 62. Camper

See Answers On Page 13

Read For The Record Day at CES

Debbie Brooks and Patty Bailey read the book *See Marcus Grow* to grades K – 2 at CES on "Read for the Record" Day February 26. They joined millions of others who read the book all across the nation.

